

Editorial

## **Multidisciplinary Breadth: The Many Facets of English as an Additional Language Teaching and Learning**

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### **Abstract**

This editorial celebrates the longest issue of the *BC TEAL Journal* published to date, with nine articles covering 141 pages and reflecting the multiple settings and contexts of the journal's readership. It also conceptualizes the field of English as an additional language (EAL) teaching and learning as the bringing together of applied linguistics and education to highlight the nexus of scholarship and practice and the positive impact this connection can make on transforming EAL teaching and learning. With this understanding, the editorial describes three major themes in the current issue related to identity, additional language writing, and post-secondary EAL supports. These themes, along with the journal's growing readership and meaningful volunteer opportunities, are offered as evidence of the journal's dedication to supporting BC TEAL's mission and strengthening the field of EAL teaching and learning.

### **From the Editor**

The Association of British Columbia Teachers of English as an Additional Language (BC TEAL) is a big tent, with members coming from K-12 education, post-secondary institutions, private language schools, language instruction for newcomers, settlement services, and adult basic education—to name a few. The 2021 issue of the *BC TEAL Journal* is the longest issue published to date, with nine peer-reviewed articles covering 141 pages of scholarship related to English as an additional language (EAL) teaching and learning. Looking through the range of topics in this year's issue reveals the dynamic breadth of EAL teaching and learning and highlights the importance of regional organizations, such as BC TEAL, in maintaining scholarly journals that foster and provide an outlet for quality peer-reviewed work that might not otherwise find its way into publication. What's more, this issue illustrates the multifaceted nature of EAL teaching and learning as reflected in BC TEAL's membership, with articles borrowing from an array of fields and research approaches while focusing on a variety of contexts and situations.

Despite the range of disciplines and settings represented in the journal, commonalities arise through these differences to point to defining traits related to the field of EAL teaching and learning. One commonality is a kinship with Brumfit's (1995) broad conceptualization of applied linguistics as scholarly inquiry that takes into account the wide range of linguistic and other factors connected to practical language-related issues and draws on a variety of interdisciplinary understandings and research traditions to investigate those issues as they unfold in the real world. Another commonality is an embracing of the scholar-practitioner identity, with scholar-practitioners seeing themselves as ongoing students of learning, exploring what and how to teach, supporting and being supported by their communities, articulating and strengthening their educational practice, and engaging with the intellectual life of teaching, research, and theory

(Macintyre Latta et al., 2017). Thus, the disciplines of applied linguistics and education come together in the field of EAL teaching and learning, and the papers in this issue of the *BC TEAL Journal* live in the nexus of scholarship and practice, blurring the lines between the two to promote the free movement of knowledge and insight with the goal of positively impacting and transforming teaching and learning.

The articles in the 2021 issue of the *BC TEAL Journal* generally fall into three broad themes related to identity, additional language writing, and post-secondary EAL supports. The first theme touches on gender, sexual orientation, race, and labour. For example, Derichsweiler (2021) identified how gender issues and understandings of sexual orientation impact academic success and pointed to key considerations for planning EAL lessons in K-12 settings. Whiteness and English language teaching (ELT) were also explored in another paper, with particular attention to disrupting power dynamics and colonial legacies in ELT (Mortenson, 2021). In a third paper, teacher identity was discussed in connection to employing critical pedagogy in English for academic purposes (EAP) classrooms, and how the conceptualization of EAP on the margins of higher education and the precarity of EAP instructor employment negatively impacts the potential for using critical pedagogy with EAP students (Walsh Marr, 2021).

Another theme in the current issue focuses the spotlight on additional language writing in post-secondary contexts. First of all, how instructors can help EAP students overcome the cultural challenges of writing in their additional language was examined by Bhowmik and Chaudhuri (2021), revealing some key supports that can be implemented in the EAP classroom. Next, Uludag, Crawford, and McDonough (2021) created a corpus of 1027 texts written by EAP students and used this corpus to identify how reporting verbs are used in argumentative and cause-and-effect essays. Finally, Mao (2021) reoriented understandings of EAL writers in post-secondary contexts away from a focus on EAL writers' perceived deficits and towards a focus on EAL writers' agency and resourcefulness when writing in their additional language.

The third theme emerging from this issue relates to how to support EAL learners in post-secondary contexts. Surtees and Yamamoto (2021) theoretically contextualized and described the creation and implementation of an online orientation module for international students new to Canadian post-secondary studies, with particular attention paid to creating inclusive, accessible, and multimodal learning experiences. Another paper in this issue focused on a student support centre for EAP students at a Canadian university and the motivations of the mostly graduate student volunteers in this centre (Dobson, Freimuth, & Rodriques, 2021). Also related to EAP settings was a third paper connected to supporting EAL learners and how to implement universal design for learning as a teaching framework that provides multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression (Khatri, 2021).

All in all, the *BC TEAL Journal* remains dedicated to supporting BC TEAL's mission to raise awareness, provide professional development, and share expertise in support of EAL teaching excellence (BC TEAL, 2021). The journal's contribution to BC TEAL's mission is evident in the meaningful volunteer opportunities it offers as advisory board members, peer reviewers, and editors. It is also evident in the growing readership of its articles (over 44,000 abstract views and 27,000 downloads to date), and its unwavering commitment to the free and open access to knowledge without charges for submitting, publishing, or reading the journal's

articles. As another issue of the *BC TEAL Journal* closes and the editorial team looks forward to a new year of encouraging and sharing the work of scholar-practitioners who explore issues related to applied linguistics and language education, this issue is an example of what regional teaching organizations can achieve when their members come together to support the strengthening of teaching, research, and theory to grow the field EAL teaching and learning.

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